distribution, to creep from part to part, and to subside in one region as it invades another. Sensory disturbances are not limited to the extremities, but are apt to involve districts situated in the middle line of the body, including the tongue and mouth and the senses of taste and smell. Paralysis of diphtheritic origin is liable not only to affect the arms, legs, respiratory muscles, muscles of the trunk and accommodation, and of swallowing, but also the vocal cords and even single nerves. Knee-jerks are first exaggerated, then abolished, and the affected muscles acquire the characteristic reactions of degeneration. Many of the phenomena are such as would seem to be best explained on the assumption that they are due to spreading neuritis. Others (such as sensory affections along the middle line, the early undue briskness of knee-jerk, and nystagmus) seem rather to be due to some spreading central lesion. I am inclined to believe that, in diphtheritic paralysis, a wave, so to speak, of slight inflammatory mischief spreads not only through the medulla oblongata and cord, but along the nerve trunk also.—J. S. Bristowe, in British Medical Journal, Feb. 14, 1888. L. F. B.

DENTITION AMONG IDIOTIC AND BACKWARD CHILDREN.

Dr. Alice Sollier (Ancienne Externe des Hôpitaux de Paris et de l'Hôpital des Enfants-Malades) finds that idiocy, with or without epilepsy, predisposes ninety-one per cent. of the victims to dental deformity and disease. The record includes one hundred clinical cases. Congenital idiocy has no more special influence in this respect than idiocy developed during the first dentition. Deformities and lesions are almost exclusively associated with the second dentition. The appearance and shedding of the milk teeth are usually delayed. In fourteen per cent. there were dwarfed teeth; in eleven per cent., giant teeth. Other abnormalities were found in fifty-three per cent, and absence of teeth in eleven per cent. Giant teeth were often found where others had not developed, or else they represented anchylosis of two adjacent teeth. In only two per cent. were supernumerary teeth discovered. Anomalies of implantation were common (thirty-four per cent.), but anomalies of position in relation to other teeth rare. Crookedness, obliqueness, etc., were the most frequent of all malformations, and chiefly affected the canines and incisors. Erosion (loss of substance of the enamel over a greater or less area of the surface of a tooth) was often associated with convulsions, but was most frequent in cases where there were no convulsions; thus Dr. Sollier concludes that idiocy, with or without epilepsy, can by itself cause erosion. In forty-one per cent. of the whole series there was longitudinal grooving of the enamel; in fifty-eight per cent. the edges of some of the teeth were notched. Both these peculiarities, especially the notches, more often coincided with convulsions than did erosions. The articulation of the upper and lower dental arches was defective in forty-three per cent. In thirty-eight per cent. each arch showed deformity. Madame Sollier calls attention to an undescribed anomaly of this class, where the level of the two halves of the arch is unsymmetrical. In forty-five per cent. of the cases the palatine vault was deformed. In nine cases of idiocy, and imbecility with epilepsy, none of the above characteristic lesions could be discovered.—British Medical Journal, Feb. 28, 1888.

L. F. B.

SLEEPING WITH THE HEAD NORTH.

The superstition that human beings should sleep with their heads to the north is believed by the French to have for its foundation a scientific fact. They affirm that each human system is in itself an electric battery, the head being one of the electrodes, the feet the other. Their proof was discovered from experiments which the Academy of Sciences was allowed to make on the body of a man who was guillotined. This was taken the instant it fell and placed upon a pivot free to move as it might. The head part, after a little vacillation, turned to the north, and the body then remained stationary. It was turned half-way around by one of the professors, and again the head end of the trunk moved slowly to the cardinal point due north, the same results being repeated until the final cessation of organic movement.—Pacific Record.

L. F. B.